

Reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

REMARKS

Rejection of the Claims Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a)

In the Office Action dated 11/10/99 , the Examiner rejected claims under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as anticipated by MacNaughton (U.S. Patent 5,796,393). Although some of the base processes such as displaying a menu, forming databases and using email are common to both inventions, the scope, function and methods of these two inventions are quite different.

U.S. Patent 5,796,393 by MacNaughton et al. provides a system for interconnecting a community of subscribers, to share information and opinions related to "foreign" web sites and internet services. This system provides a variety of services that enable subscribers to send to and receive from the subscriber community, information about web sites, gaming, and other internet activities. The system tracks subscriber web use, and promotes social contact between visitors to the same sites, by means such as chat rooms, forums, and polls.

The present application provides a system enabling a client to efficiently obtain authoritative information directly from a service provider. The system provides mechanisms for the client to provide information to the service provider about a client problem, and the client computer status and actions leading to the problem. This information is then used by the service provider to more efficiently find a solution and transmit it back to the client. The system tracks client problems and corresponding client

status information. This information is compiled, correlated, and used to direct future client requests, based on a comparison with new client problem and status information. Solutions are found either (1) by a self-help search in a database of information, (2) by means of an asynchronous reply with database information or from a help service advisor or (3) by synchronous interaction with a help service advisor.

The claims have been amended to emphasize the differences between these methods.

In particular, previous claim 1:

A method comprising:

in response to a client requesting help, displaying a menu including three levels of interaction:

self-help searching in a database of information;

asynchronous help, requesting help and receiving a reply; and

synchronous help, interaction with an advisor;

if the client requests synchronous,

alerting the advisor;

displaying a list of previously visited sites by the client to the advisor; and

synchronizing display between the client and the advisor, such that the advisor sees an identical display to the client.

was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as anticipated by MacNaughton (U.S. Patent 5,796,393).

The MacNaughton reference describes a set of tools that determines a group of clients having a shared interest, and enables various interactions that facilitate creation of community content, including alerting the group of interesting information. The MacNaughton reference at column 2, lines 3-49 describes internet connectivity, including protocols, methods to locate information such as menus and linking to other computers. The MacNaughton reference at column 8 lines 10-23 describes determination of a group of clients having a shared interest, and enables various interactions with the community, including synchronous communications such as chatting and conferencing.

These described communications such as alerting members of a community and forming a synchronous communication with interested members by means such as chatting or conferencing, are very different than a service provider responding to a "client requesting help" by "selecting at least one advisor" and "alerting said at least one advisor", so as to contact and synchronously interface with a specific requesting client.

The system of the present invention wherein a server provider advisor is contacted is described more clearly in amended claim 1, in which the selection of, alerting of, response from and synchronizing the display between an advisor determined by the service provider are specifically included.

Amended claim 14, is similarly amended such that the selection of and alerting of an advisor are specified.

Claims 2-13 and 15-20, which were rejected or objected to, owing to being dependent upon invalid claims, have been modified, and are, we believe, now dependent on valid claims.

Objection to the Drawings

In response to the draftsperson's drawing review, drawings of **Figures 1-8** are being redrafted to correct the cited deficiencies. The new drawings will all include corrected margins. **Figure 2** will have uniform thickness and line quality, plain and legible numbers and reference characters, and at least 1/8 in. height. Solid black shading will be removed.


CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the rejections and objections is requested. Allowance is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: 4/10/00


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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231, on Tuesday, April 11, 2000.


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4/10/00
Date